
"THE MESA REFINERY WATCH GROUP"

NEWSLETTER: July 18, 2016

FACT-CHECKED REASONS TO REJECT THE PHILLIPS 66 RAIL TERMINAL



CRUDE-BY-RAIL:

- Only Phillips 66 Wins
- Citizens Become Collateral Damage

- www.mesarefinerywatch.com

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A. WHAT'S NEW THAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

1. Citizens Rallied Yet Again To Vehemently Protest P66's Crude-By-Rail Strategy For SLO County & California

On July 9th, hundreds of people gathered in SLO's Mitchell Park to generate further awareness of the dangers of P66's plan to bring oil trains to California and SLO County.

The gathering included men and women, young and old, Democrats and Republicans, businesspeople, concerned citizens and government officials. Truly, the rally showed that this is a **bipartisan** issue! Everyone would be affected!



a. Keynote Speaker Describes The Impact Of The Recent Oregon Train Disaster And What It Would Mean To SLO County

The rally's featured speaker was Mayor Arlene Burns of Mosier, Oregon. Her community suffered a catastrophic oil train derailment and explosion just last month based on the negligence of the Union Pacific Railroad. Graciously, she also granted interviews to the Mesa Refinery Watch Group. Below is a compilation of her remarks:

- **The Expectation That "It Won't Happen Here":**
"Never in a million years did I think a train would derail on our doorstep. I thought it was not possible (because) the train only goes 30 mph through our town. (But the) train derailed and spanned the entire city limits.

"Sixteen cars derailed. The tankers were ballooning in the heat (with four) exploding. I thought - if one tanker explodes they'll all explode.

"The blast zone of one car is one mile. It's almost like a minor nuclear explosion. There was horrible black smoke."



**"All of a sudden our reality was very, very different.
 One thing we've learned is that trains derail. It's not a matter of if but when."**



- **The Inability Of First Responders To Fight The Fires:** “We were really not prepared. Our fire department arrived and was on the scene in moments, but they had **no training and no equipment to deal with such a fire**. So they waited for their mutual aid partners from Washington, Oregon and Portland International Airport.



“(But) the interstate was closed for 23 miles. Like your (freeway) 101 it’s the main drag. We always thought we were a little vulnerable. What nobody had thought about was when the interstate closes and there’s a backup of cars, guess who couldn’t get here to help us? **The first responders! They were stuck in gridlock traffic.** The ones who had the ability to help us were the Portland airport foam trucks ... but they were stuck in traffic!”

- **Impact On Businesses, The Local Economy & The Town's Reputation**

“Very much like (SLO County), Mosier is an **agriculture and tourist economy**, and that’s what we want to be known as ... not as a place where trains derail. (But) our town is now known as the town where the derailment happened.

“People come here because it’s vibrant. (But) tourists can choose to come or stay away -- (they) have a choice of where to spend their money. The railroad doesn’t mix with this. Union Pacific paid for a radio ad that told visitors they could come back to Mosier. But we can’t have oil trains coming through during tourist season.”



“Our businesses believe there’s zero economic benefit for Oregon.”



“The oil industry is looking for weaknesses, they’re looking for vulnerabilities. They’re looking for communities that have a misguided view of what they will gain, and not calculating the risk involved.”

“(This derailment also) means our **property values have gone down**. People are questioning -- do I want to live here ... do I want my kids to live here?”

- **Impact On Parents & Students:** “The (elementary) school was only 200 yards from the accident. Parents immediately called me. They said ‘*Where are our kids? Where do we go?*’ I needed to calm down parents. A boy kept taking deep breaths and said ‘*how do I keep safe going to school?*’



“The kids lost their graduation. The incident command took over the school (see photo).”

“(Now) parents are choosing to put children in schools that are not near railroad tracks.

There are five schools in the blast zone (in SLO County). And you have one of the most prone tracks for derailment

down this (Cuesta) grade. This is a *super serious* issue.”

- **The “Miracle Of Mosier”:** “The fact that the wind was not blowing on this one day, we will consider a miracle and grace from heaven. **If the wind had been blowing we would have lost our town and the 225 children from our school.** (But) the children were evacuated.”

- **Impact On The Sewer System & Hygiene:** “We had no sewage system for five to seven days. Nobody could flush a toilet or take a shower. We had a boil water notice. Even though 100 houses were evacuated, the rest of us (also) had no facilities.”
-

- **Impact On Soil And Water Resources:** “We just found out that they removed 40 tons of soil that had crude in it. **(And) we still have contamination in our groundwater.** We won’t find out the level and extent until our rainy season. The oil and contamination from foam is filtered into the water table. It’s very, very difficult to remove.”
-



- **Coming Together To Stop Crude Oil Trains:** “This whole situation has woken us up. **They (the oil and rail industries) might wish they’d have killed us off, because we can’t shut up about it.** We all need to stand in solidarity. We’re all connected in this. We’re not anti-business ... we’re pro a sustainable, healthy community.”
-



- **SLO County - Where The Battle Must Be Won:** “You guys are in a unique position. In Oregon the oil trains had already started flowing. The terminals are already (there).

“It’s really imperative to nip this in the bud, before it starts. **It’s just like a relationship ... easier to get into it than out of it.** Once the infrastructure is in place, it’s very difficult to stop these crude oil trains. *It’s not too late here. For us it’s already too late!*”

“Here you can stop this before it starts. And it’s a hell of a lot easier to stop it now than once it’s been approved. This is the lynchpin, right here. This community has a responsibility to take into account everyone along the tracks. The people are endangered and the habitat for our wildlife is endangered.”

**“Stay on it. Be tenacious.
It’s a fight worth fighting for yourselves, for your children and for your grandchildren.
We don’t have time to sit back on this one. It’s upon us.” - Mayor Arlene Burns**

b. Santa Barbara County Supervisor Reminds Us Of Elected Officials' Obligations

Santa Barbara County Supervisor Salud Carbajal (candidate to fill Lois Capps' Congressional seat) told the crowd ...



- “Your elected officials have one responsibility above all -- to protect the health and safety of their communities. **Your local officials have not been responsible by the initial (straw) vote that they took.** Our collective voices today should continue to that next hearing, to get them to reconsider the fallacy of their direction and their vote.

“There are three things at stake. There is not only a danger to our public safety and to some of the most ecological wonders in our communities, but also to our economy.”

“There is no way that findings can be made to support this project. No way! I am here in solidarity with you because this project has to be stopped.”

c. Rally Organizer Tells Us To Be More Demanding Of Candidates Running For SLO County Supervisor

Charles Varni of Oceano, a “Stop The Oil Trains Rally” organizer and member of the SLO County Surfrider Foundation, also discussed political issues ...

- “We need people to reach out to supervisors and encourage them to deny this project. It’s very important that we be involved in the supervisors’ election and that we **demand from candidates to clearly hear ‘where do you stand on this issue?’**

“No more -- ‘Oh, I really can’t comment because it might come in front of the board and I’m running for office, and blah, blah, blah.’ No - we want to know where you stand! Demand this of the supervisors.”



d. Additional Rally Organizer Reminds Us Of “People Power”

Heidi Harmon is Chair of the Climate Change Task Force for Santa Lucia Sierra Club and Program Director for the local chapter of 350.org. She told the “oil train fighters” ...

- “We have some pretty powerful and high-dollar folks that we’re fighting here. And they may have all the money in the world. But -- they do not have all the people we have. (It’s been said that) **organized money will never win over organized people.** That’s what we’re doing here today.”



- e. **Protesters March To The SLO Train Station:** After listening to the above speakers, oil train opponents marched peacefully to the Amtrak station. As they marched, they shouted out their message over and over again ... *"Hey, hey! Ho, ho! Oil trains have got to go!"*
One foreboding sign read ...

"SLO IS MOSIER WAITING TO HAPPEN"



- **KSBY:** <http://goo.gl/0SOX1J>
- **KETY:** <http://goo.gl/C96L4e>
- **SLO Tribune:** <http://goo.gl/IfXmDQ>
- **Santa Maria Times:** <http://goo.gl/H5wlfo> and <http://goo.gl/BztO4M>
- **YouTube:** <https://goo.gl/kVNCsV>

2. Follow-up On The Columbia River Gorge/Mosier, OR Accident (Occurred June 3, 2016)

a. Trains Continue To Run Even Though The Cause Hasn't Been Remedied

- ▶ The Mosier derailment was blamed on track “lag bolts” that had been sheared off by Union Pacific’s trains prior to the accident. Freight trains resumed travel on the same tracks within days of the incident. Then oil trains began coming through less than three weeks after the disaster.



Yet, according to the Oregon Department of Transportation, Union Pacific will not start replacing the track bolts in the Columbia River Gorge **until sometime this August**.

<http://www.omaha.com/content/tncms/live/>

b. Objections About Crude Oil Trains From Oregon’s Senators Fall On Deaf Ears

- ▶ Both of Oregon’s U.S. Senators have strongly objected to Union Pacific resuming travel of trains hauling crude oil tankers. They wrote to the Federal Railroad Administration ...

“The impacts were substantial. The evacuation zone included Interstate 84. The closure not only disrupted commerce, but hindered the response of first responders.”

The evacuation included a school with 200 children, as well as 100 nearby households. Oil leaked into the sewer treatment plant, forcing its closure. We request the FRA place a moratorium on trains transporting crude oil through the Gorge.”

Their request was ignored. The trains are running yet again.



“We're playing Russian roulette. The industry is perfectly willing to put a gun to our heads and risk our lives for the sake of making money. It is abundantly clear this enterprise is unsafe, unsustainable and they don't know how to manage it.”

- Eric de Place, Policy Director, Sightline Institute, a Seattle think tank

<http://www.ohio.com/blogs/drilling/ohio-utica-shale-1.291290/oregon-s-senators-object-to-resumption-of-crude-oil-trains-1.692411>
http://www.oregonlive.com/pacific-northwest-news/index.ssf/2016/06/mosier_really_dodged_a_bullet.html

c. How Rail Inspectors Failed To Prevent The Columbia River Gorge Accident

Just 37 days prior to the derailment, four inspectors rode directly over broken bolts on the tracks ... which ultimately caused the massive fires.

The inspectors used a specially-equipped Union Pacific pickup truck rolling at 10 mph. Yet even at that slow speed, they were unable to detect that the tops of bolts (see photo) had been sheared off by trains that passed by previously.

Steve Holm, one of the inspectors recalled - "There was nothing outstanding that stood out in my mind." Holms says he just missed (the broken bolts).



- ▶ **According to Oregon Public Broadcasting -- "Union Pacific said it followed federal laws, meaning in the five weeks that followed Holm's track survey, its own inspectors would have passed over those bolts at least 10 more times."**

"Those unseen, broken bolts expose a significant flaw in railroad inspections. Yet, regulators as well as the railroads say current rules are adequate. As Mosier showed, the system can allow potentially dangerous defects to go unaddressed for months."

According to Federal Railroad Administration executive Sarah Feinberg - "*It's Union Pacific's failure to maintain its track (that) led to this incident.*"

SLO County is no less vulnerable to Union Pacific's inadequate inspection system. They must be prevented from hauling P66's flammable crude oil trains through our communities.

<http://www.opb.org/news/series/oil-trains/how-inspectors-missed-broken-bolts-mosier/>

d. Why Did The NTSB Decline To Investigate The Derailment?

The National Transportation Safety Board did not explore June's derailment in Mosier. It said an investigation would not have generated new safety recommendations. (This is startling, given that sheared off bolts are quite uncommon and easily missed.)

The overriding reason is more likely that the agency has **limited staff** and chose not to learn from this accident.

Oregon Sen. Ron Wyden responded -- "*I find it very disturbing that the NTSB did not appear to have enough resources to send an investigative team to Oregon to closely examine the Mosier accident.*" He will be looking into whether the agency needs to hire more investigators.



<http://beniciaindependent.com/npr-why-feds-chose-not-to-investigate-oil-train-derailment-in-columbia-gorge/>

3. P66 Unveils New Corporate Headquarters Tower In Houston - Employees Rejoice

An Exquisite “Trophy Tower” Including A Yoga Studio, Massage Parlor, Dry Cleaners, Putting Green, Spinning Studio, Basketball Court, Soccer Field, Fire Pit, Dentists’ & Physicians’ Offices, Demonstrate How Financially “Viable” The Oil Company Truly Is



Throughout P66’s attempts to gain approval for its crude oil trains, they’ve told us a tale of woe. They claim that in order to remain fiscally “**viable**” and protect jobs, it’s necessary for our communities to accept their air, noise, visual and light pollution, as well as the risk of derailments, fires, explosions, smoke and environmental destruction.

It seems that P66’s definition of “viable” includes the urgency to provide employees with a new, country club-style headquarters. As you can see from the above photo, everyone **appears joyous** at the prospect of meditating prior to meetings, practicing their putting strokes between calls with stockholders, and staying “buff” before attacking their busy days.

The good news -- they built all of this **without profits from oil trains in SLO County!!!** Perhaps we’re wrong, but it seems that P66 is quite “viable”, without putting us all in danger.

4. After The Lac Mégantic Disaster - The Town Wants To Relocate The Railroad Tracks; Others Suggest A Cheaper Solution ... Just Build A Wall

Three years after large portions of this town were destroyed and 47 people died from an oil train derailment, restoration work continues. Damaged structures have been demolished. Contaminated soil removed. Infrastructure rebuilding goes on -- including electricity, communications, sewers.

(Photo shows a freight train moving through today's reconstruction site.)



According to health authorities, 70% of the Lac Mégantic population suffers from post-traumatic shock.

- ▶ Residents understandably want to re-route the trains via a 7-mile bypass at a cost of \$89 million. However, one expert responded that it wouldn't make sense to divert trains around small towns because it would be too costly.

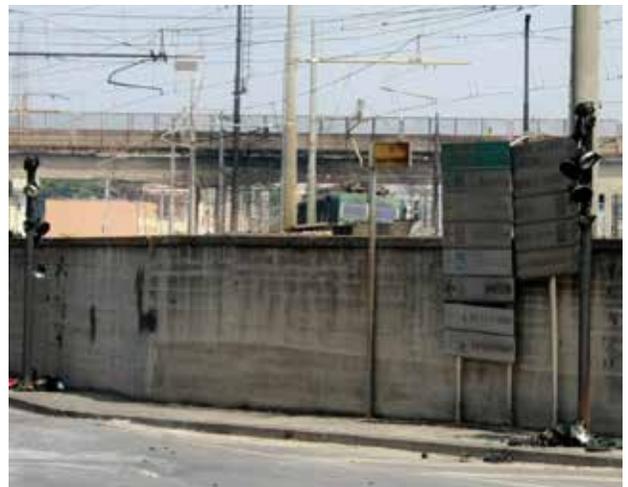
The railroad's CEO said the bypass would have to be government-funded. In effect, the railroad would retain their profits, while the taxpayers foot the bill for safety.

- ▶ Another proposal is to **build a less costly (\$35 million), 10-foot high wall** at certain locations between the town and the trains; photo shows what such a wall might look like.

Our thoughts - a simple wall couldn't possibly protect anyone or anything from the type of massive explosions and fires that blew the town apart in 2013.

A spokesman for a Lac Mégantic citizens' group responded that a wall would keep the population **"in permanent stress."**

<http://goo.gl/tSLs9B>
<http://goo.gl/eQOYWc>



5. Derailments Ignite Not Only Fire And Toxic Smoke, But Litigation Well Into The Future

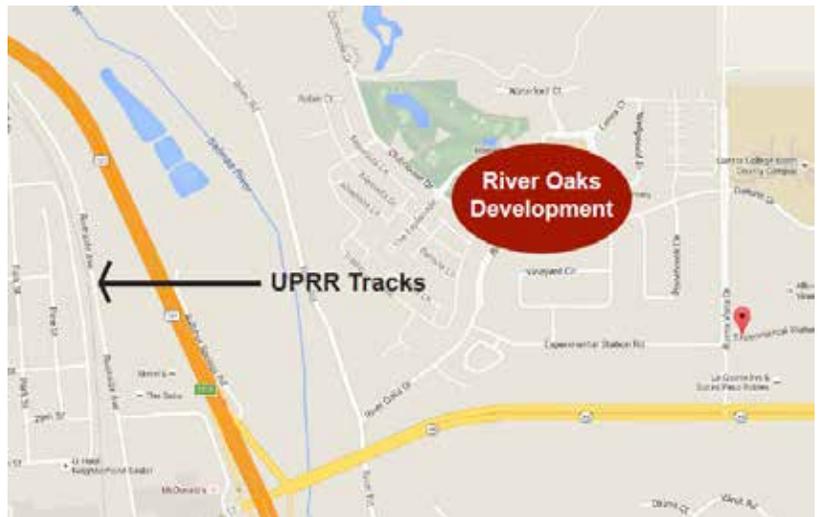
- ▶ **July, 2015 - Maryville, Tenn.:** A train carrying flammable liquid (acrylonitrile) derailed, caught fire and spread noxious fumes. 5,000 people were evacuated; 52 were admitted to the hospital, many with respiratory issues.
- ▶ A year later, lawsuits are pending against CSX Railroad and the company that built the tank cars:
 - **First Responders' Lawsuit:** Hospitalized police officers are suing based on the chemicals to which they were exposed. They claim the railroad should have prevented the accident and that the tankers weren't designed to carry toxic materials.
 - **Residents' Lawsuit:** A citizens' suit claims - "The railroad was negligent in failing to keep their train on the tracks. Not only did they allow it to derail through improper inspection and maintenance, but they (pulled the train) for nine miles causing it to rupture and catch on fire in a residential neighborhood. (The chemical) is a cancer-causing agent that was released into the atmosphere. A lot of (people) breathed that."



<http://www.startribune.com/train-derailment-fire-prompts-evacuation-in-tennessee/311411381/>
<http://wate.com/2016/06/30/1-year-after-maryville-train-derailment-lawsuits-keep-moving-forward/>

6. Paso Robles Approves Expansion Of "River Oaks" Development; Unfortunately, The Community Is In The Blast Zone For P66's Crude Oil Tankers

The Paso Robles City Council has voted unanimously to add 271 homes to River Oaks. The decision expands a development that will **either be in or very near the "blast zone"** should a crude oil train derail, with fire and smoke spreading outward.



River Oaks not only includes hundreds of homes and the Kermit King Elementary School, but tourist-based **businesses** such as wineries, the River Oaks Hot Springs Spa, and the River Oaks Golf Course. So both residential and commercial entities would be endangered.

Until now, the Paso Robles government has been hesitant to oppose the rail project. But mounting evidence about the reality of crude oil train accidents will hopefully prompt them to change their minds and stand up for citizens and businesses.

<http://www.newtimesslo.com/news/13984/paso-robles-council-approves-river-oaks-expansion/>

7. It's Non-Stop -- More Derailments, More Spills, More Fires

a. June 28, 2016 - Panhandle, Texas: Two Trains Collide Head-On; Three Dead



Two Burlington Northern Santa Fe freight trains crashed head-on along a single track, resulting in an enormous collision, fireball and smoke. Containers carrying a variety of consumer goods piled on top of one another and were strewn for 400 yards. Why the trains came from opposite directions on the same track is being investigated.

A local farmer remarked - *"I don't know how anyone survived. It's terrible. I've seen a number of train wrecks but I've never seen one like this."*

Three crew members died. A fourth was saved when he jumped just prior to impact. Local residents were evacuated and their water use restricted in order to fight the fire.

SPECIAL NOTE: UPRR's tracks in much of SLO County and California are also single tracks, so they're also vulnerable to head-on collisions. For example ...

- **In 2008, a Union Pacific freight train and a Metrolink commuter train collided head-on in the Chatsworth district of Los Angeles. The accident occurred on single track. Twenty-five people died.**

Of course, if such a collision were to involve P66's oil tankers carrying diluted, flammable tar sands, the disaster would be of incredible proportions.



b. July 4, 2016 - San Antonio, TX: Trains Derail And Spill A Poisonous Chemical

Five cars on a train owned and operated by the oilfield services company Schlumberger overturned. It leaked about 1,000 gallons of sodium hydroxide ... a poisonous, highly-corrosive chemical known as caustic soda or lye. Approximately 6,000 people were evacuated. Two crewmen were injured. Cleanup of contaminated soil and vegetation were begun. The cause - unknown.

<http://m.chron.com/news/houston-texas/texas/article/Large-scale-train-derailment-reported-just-8329427.php>
<http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/local/article/Several-videos-capture-moments-after-trains-8331885.php>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pgPR_U4PMbw
<http://amarillo.com/slideshow/2016-06-28/head-train-collision#slide-1>
<http://amarillo.com/news/latest-news/2016-07-01/search-continues-bnsf-crew-member>
<http://m.chron.com/news/houston-texas/texas/article/Large-scale-train-derailment-reported-just-8329427.php>
<http://finance.yahoo.com/news/texas-train-collision-triggers-fireball-no-word-injuries-151611227.html>
<http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/train-cars-derail-texas-spilling-chemical-injuring-40322187>
<https://www.rt.com/usa/349478-chemical-spill-texas-fracking/>
<http://www.colorlines.com/articles/train-derails-texas-spilling-fracking-chemicals-latinx-community>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2008_Chatsworth_train_collision

8. New Federal Law - Delivery Of Crude Oil By Pipeline Will Now Be Even Safer

No method of crude oil delivery is completely free from accidents. But according to SLO County's Planning Commission Staff*, pipeline delivery is safer than rail or truck.

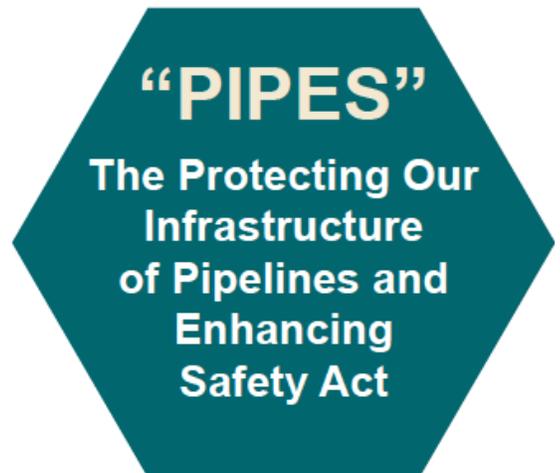
And moving forward, pipelines will be even less likely to leak their contents. President Obama just signed a new law entitled PIPES (the Protecting our Infrastructure of Pipelines and Enhancing Safety Act). It calls for ...

- ▶ Increased analysis leading to more frequent pipeline inspections.
- ▶ Greater investigation of pipeline corrosion which will lead to preventative measures.
- ▶ Classifying beaches as "High Consequence Areas" which require higher safety standards.

Given ongoing crude oil train disasters and government predictions for even more rail failures, it makes sense to deny P66's rail project for SLO County.

It makes sense to allow them to continue accessing their crude via pipeline, as they've done safely for 60 years.

*Planning Commission Hearing; 5/20/16
<http://www.santamariasun.com/news/14825/president-enacts-oil-pipeline-safety-law/>



9. Citizens Make Their Emotions Known About The P66 Rail Project

 **Carolyn Gorsuch Of San Luis Obispo, In A Santa Maria Times Letter To The Editor (July, 2016):** “For over 30 years I owned my own business, and am very supportive of free enterprise. I understand businesses need to make a profit, but I would never have conceived of putting thousands of people, schools, hospitals, fire stations, government buildings and the environment at risk with my business practices.

“Anyone who supports the Phillips 66 proposal is irresponsible, or does not understand the ramifications and risks. SLO County supervisors have the responsibility to protect the residents, businesses, schools, and public services from potential disasters. The proposal is clearly a highly potential disaster.”



 **Dr. Alice Welchert Of Los Osos, In A Letter To The SLO County Board Of Supervisors (June, 2016):** “I join thousands of other people in strongly opposing the Phillips 66 project. It is shocking that the Planning Commission is still moving forward in any form, over the recommendation of its own (expert) staff and testimony of hundreds of people, many of them experts, about the devastating consequences of these dangerous trains.

“As you know, another train - Union Pacific - exploded near the Columbia River. I try to imagine the mindset that would expose our state and county to this level of catastrophe. ‘We need the oil/jobs?’ ‘It can’t happen here?’ I urge you to be realistic. A derailment CAN happen here. Put the brakes on this horrific project designed to enrich Phillips 66 to the detriment of our communities.”

 **Mary Peracca Of San Luis Obispo, In A SLO Tribune Letter To The Editor (July, 2016):** “Two years ago, Mosier (Oregon) passed a resolution saying it wanted no oil trains coming through town. The federal government and Union Pacific ignored them and did it anyway. Mosier did not have a choice. We do. Say ‘No’ to the oil train terminal in San Luis Obispo County.”

 **Chip & Emily Schamp Of Morro Bay, In A Letter To The SLO County Planning Commission (June, 2016):** “Too many oil train catastrophes have already occurred. The reward of job creation in favor of the oil trains is insufficient to the risk involved. Protect (us) from mishaps such as the one in Oregon. Protect our health and well being. Protect this beautiful county. Deny oil trains in San Luis Obispo County.”

 **Kay Gore Of Arroyo Grande, In A SLO Tribune Letter To The Editor (July, 2016):**

"I am shocked at the lack of concern many officials have displayed relevant to the significant health and safety risks to SLO County citizens and the environment posed by the Phillips 66 rail spur.

"The trains (they) propose have already proven to be not only a highly flammable risk if derailed, but also simply by traversing the tracks, the toxins they spew would result in a calculable increase in lung and heart diseases, as well as cancers.

"We look to the Planning Commission to uphold its duty to the greater community to keep us safe and to guard our health and environment by denying the rail spur."



 **Andrew Roof Of San Luis Obispo, In A SLO Tribune Letter To The Editor (July, 2016):** "I am dismayed at the attitude of several SLO County planning commissioners - (that their) vote doesn't matter ... it will end in court anyway. (However) if the permit is approved, Phillips 66 can begin building the rail spur even if the decision is being contested in court. This will give the company serious leverage as judges will be reluctant to direct Phillips to remove what they have already built at significant cost.

"(Our officials) are tasked with protecting our health and safety, not Phillips' profits. Americans are frustrated because government no longer works for the common good but for the interests of a few. Our commissioners need to re-evaluate their positions and vote unanimously to deny the spur."

 **Kathy & Tom Ormseth Of Goleta, In A Letter To The SLO County Planning Commission (June, 2016):** "(We're) gravely concerned about trains carrying oil on the rail through Goleta. Our home is located just down hill from the tracks. If an accident or spill occurred, it would destroy our neighborhood and home.

"In 1978 an earthquake derailed a train across the street. If that train had been carrying crude oil, the loss of life and property would have been horrific.

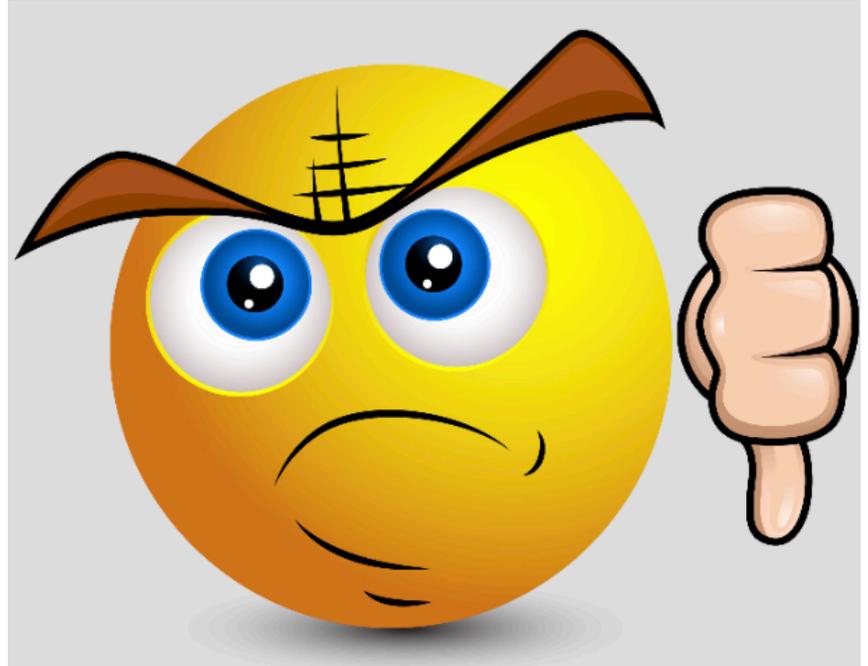
"The Union Pacific tracks run right through our beautiful neighborhood, past the local elementary school and a new retirement home. It is irresponsible to allow the transportation of dangerous cargo through such a heavily populated area.

"The responsibility for any deaths or damage will be yours, if you approve Phillips 66's oil train request. Vote NO."

 **Dean Arrighi Of San Luis Obispo, In A New Times Letter To The Editor (July, 2016):**

“Oil trains would bring a black cloud of fear constantly hanging over our heads from the very real safety risk of a train derailment, explosion, and fire.

“This black cloud will negatively affect tourism, the local economy, and our peace of mind. I urge all government officials to make the right decision by rejecting the proposed rail project.”



 **Craig Johnson Of Goleta, In A Letter To**

The SLO County Board Of Supervisors (June, 2016): “As one with a 13 year old son, I have a very strong interest in opposing this plan ... a plan where a 1 - 5% chance of a disaster occurring **is too great**.

“In my development proximate to the railroad tracks, there are about 350 lives. To us the danger is not abstract, it is real. Therefore, (P66’s) plan is unacceptable. If we prevail in our opposition, we just might save you from the nightmare of having to rationalize your decision following a disaster that results from this plan.”

 **Jack Sardegna Of San Jose, In A Letter To The SLO County Planning Commission (June, 2016):** “I am deeply concerned about the hazards to our city and our population when these trains operate or derail. (They) will pass through densely populated housing tracts, condominiums, apartments, businesses, schools and event venues. 100,000 people conduct their daily activities within one mile of the tracks.

“Citizens will be subjected to the danger and pollution spewed from the three diesel engines. We will breath the carcinogenic fumes. We will be devastated when there is a spill, explosion and fire. We will watch as our lives and livelihood go up in toxic smoke.

“And for what? Corporate greed. I urge you to reconsider your position and recognize the terrible ripple effect of approving this proposal.”

http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/planning/environmental/EnvironmentalNotices/Phillips_66_Company_Rail_Spur_Extension_Project/Project_Comment_Letters.htm

http://santamariatimes.com/news/opinion/mailbag/opposing-oil-train/article_7676e77f-1f95-53e4-88d5-d668321a317a.html

<http://www.sanluisobispo.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/article88124132.html>

<http://www.newtimeslo.com/letters-to-the-editor/14045/oil-trains-are-bad-for-the-central-coast/>

<http://www.sanluisobispo.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/article88830712.html>

<http://www.sanluisobispo.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/article88741547.html>

B. WHY YOU SHOULD CARE ABOUT WHAT PHILLIPS 66 INTENDS FOR SLO COUNTY & ALL OF CALIFORNIA

- **Phillips' Motivation:** Phillips claims they are running out of California crude to process, and therefore jobs at their Nipomo refinery are at risk. This is false. Phillips' corporate executives have stated in writing that they want their entire company to process lower-cost crude oil in order to generate higher profits. That crude would come by rail from out of the country - from Canada.

They call it "taking a classic company in a new direction" ... i.e., it's their self-proclaimed "crude-by-rail strategy." The issue is about higher profits by switching to rail delivery, not about protecting jobs.

- **Phillips' Proposal For SLO County:** For 60 years, their refinery has received crude oil by pipeline ... not one drop by rail. Under their proposal, Phillips for the first time would bring in 20,000 rail tankers per year, fully loaded with Canadian "tar sands" crude. Every year, 250 trains, each a mile long, would travel into the county. Then the same 250 trains would depart (500 trains in total).*

Along with the loaded tankers would come, for the first time, the construction of a rail terminal -- including a "railcar unloading facility", a pumping station, and a new pipeline to move the crude within the refinery. This would be accompanied by trucks and other vehicles to service the facility.

- **The Negative Impacts Of Conducting Business In An Entirely New Way:** This represents an entirely new business model for Phillips - it's a dramatic transformation in the way they operate in SLO County and all of California. This is not a benign "rail spur". The issue is the new intensity of their operations and what they intend to bring in on those rails. The impacts ...

- Shipments throughout California of highly flammable, diluted "tar sands" ("*one of the world's dirtiest and most environmentally destructive sources of fuel*" - U.S. Sen. Barbara Boxer).
- *Air pollution* from diesel exhaust, the refining of tar sands and the resulting petroleum coke dust.
- *Noise pollution* from blaring whistles and track noise throughout SLO County & California.
- *Light pollution* from 15 to 30-foot-tall light towers surrounding the rail yard.
- Statewide *visual pollution* of mile-long trains laden with graffiti, each hauling 80 oil tankers.
- The potential for *derailments and oil spills* anywhere in SLO County & California.
- The potential for *fires, explosions and toxic smoke* anywhere in SLO County & California.
- The potential for *severe property damage* anywhere in SLO County & California.
- The potential for *injuries and deaths* anywhere in SLO County & California.
- The potential to *damage the reputation* of SLO County as a place to live, work and visit.
- And the potential to *damage the economic well-being* of our homeowners and businesses.

Special Note: P66 claims that local officials are preempted by Federal law from protecting their citizens regarding anything related to the mainline railroad and the contents of the tank cars. However both SLO County Counsel and the CA Attorney General state it's the obligation of local governments to take into account all impacts - both within and outside their geographical region.

- **What SLO County Officials Must Do:** Therefore, given all of the above impacts -- SLO County's Planning Commissioners and Supervisors must reject Phillips' "rail spur" plan. If the terminal is not built, the trains will not be targeting California and SLO County.

*On Feb. 1, 2016 P66 reduced their proposal to 150 trains arriving per year (300 arriving/departing).

C. REFERENCES - RECENT VIDEOS & NEWS ARTICLES

(Stay current with news, articles and videos in-between newsletters at MesaRefineryWatch.com.)

Selected Items Discussed In Previous Newsletters ...

- **How A Town Is Trying To Protect Its Children By Relocating Its Elementary School**
<http://goo.gl/Uc2YjX>
- **The Journal “Nature” Confirms How The Mining Of Tar Sands Is Damaging Our Air**
<http://goo.gl/C69y0c>
- **UPRR Is #1 In Penalties Assessed By U.S. Federal Railroad Regulators**
<http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/union-pacific-cars-derailed-fined-7m-years-39820832>
- **Federal Government Blames UPRR For Mosier, Oregon Crude Oil Train Derailment**
<http://goo.gl/j18GAN>
- **U.S. Senate Recognizes That Responders Are Undertrained For Crude Oil Rail Accidents**
<http://goo.gl/yeFg3j>
- **Engineering Professor: Stenner Creek Bridge Accident “Would Kill Many People”**
<http://goo.gl/v7uSjX>
- **Railroads Carrying Crude Oil Don’t Have Nearly Enough Insurance To Cover Disasters**
<http://goo.gl/5ioQjc>
- **The Planning Commission’s Public Hearings - May 16, 2016**
<http://goo.gl/edKlr5> • <http://goo.gl/7x6xe4> • <http://goo.gl/kYqQSj> • <http://goo.gl/GhcZLq>
- **The Dept. Of Commerce -- Impacts From P66’s Plan “Could Be Disastrous”**
<http://www.mesarefinerywatch.com/letters.html>
- **The DOT System To Safeguard Us From Crude-By-Rail, Is Broken In Multiple Ways**
https://www.oig.dot.gov/sites/default/files/FRA%20Oversight%20of%20Hazmat%20by%20Rail_Final%20Report%5E2-24-16.pdf
<http://www.post-gazette.com/opinion/editorials/2016/03/01/Trouble-on-the-rails-The-U-S-needs-better-oversight-of-crude-oil-cargo/stories/201603010021>
- **A Personal Message To SLO County Officials From A Lac-Mégantic Survivor**
<http://www.fweeky.com/2015/12/30/danger-in-dilbit/>
- **The Planning Commission’s Public Hearings - March 11, 2016**
<http://www.ksby.com/story/31452032/phillips-66-oil-by-rail-plan-concludes-public-comment>
<http://www.sanluisobispo.com/news/local/article65463482.html>
- **The National Academy Of Sciences Spells Out Why Tar Sands Spills Are So Disastrous**
<http://www.fweeky.com/2015/12/30/danger-in-dilbit/>
<http://www.nap.edu/read/21834/chapter/1>
- **Scientists Link Cancer To The Petcoke Piles Generated By Tar Sands**
<http://www.nationalobserver.com/2016/02/04/news/scientists-trace-cancer-linked-pollutant-oil-sands-stockpiles>
<http://www.nrdc.org/energy/tar-sands-health-effects.asp>
- **Benicia’s Planning Commission Just Told Big Oil - “Keep Your Trains Out Of Our City!”**
<http://www.sacbee.com/news/local/transportation/article59969201.html>

(continued)

- **The Planning Commission's Public Hearings - Feb. 4 - 5, 2016**
 - KSBY - Day 1: <http://www.ksby.com/story/31145147/hearing-begins-for-phillips-66-rail-spur-project-proposal>
 - SLO Tribune Day 2: <http://www.sanluisobispo.com/news/local/article58661968.html#>
- **Cal Poly Student Government, Representing 20,000 Students, Opposes P66 Plan**
<http://mustangnews.net/students-oppose-oil-train-project/>
- **Can Big Oil's Rail Terminals Be Stopped? Citizens Just Did It In Northern California!**
http://www.contracostatimes.com/breaking-news/ci_29220910/pittsburg-proposed-wespac-oil-by-rail-shipping-terminal
- **Final Environmental Impact Report (click on "Phillips 66 Rail Spur Extension Project")**
http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/planning/environmental/EnvironmentalNotices/Phillips_66_Company_Rail_Spur_Extension_Project.htm
- **Washington Allowed Oil Train Terminals; It Now Has Buyer's Remorse**
<http://ecowatch.com/2015/11/05/portland-opposes-oil-trains/>
<http://www.thenewstribune.com/news/local/politics-government/article46607600.html>
<http://www.kgw.com/story/news/2015/10/13/firefighters-vancouver-oil-train-terminal-would-put-too-many-lives-risk/73889928/>
- **Almost Half The Bridges Crossed By Oil Trains Are At Risk Of Failure**
<http://waterkeeper.org/cms/assets/uploads/2015/11/Deadly-Crossing-Web-Version.pdf>
- **Additional Crude-Via-Pipeline May Be Available For P66's Nipomo Refinery**
http://lompocrecord.com/news/local/article_da6da571-a37f-5cc7-b90d-db3d9c03edd8.html
- **Which Railroad Has More Accidents Than The Industry Norm? It's Union Pacific!**
Safety Calculator: <http://safetydata.fra.dot.gov/OfficeofSafety/publicsite/Query/rchart.aspx>
<http://www.mesarefinerywatch.com/newsletters-docs2.html>
- **U.S. DOT Confirms It -- Towns Have Insufficient Resources To Fight Oil Train Fires**
<https://www.hdiac.org/islandora/object/hdiac%3A312757/datastream/OBJ/view>
http://www.goanacortes.com/news/article_271951c6-2fe1-11e5-b57d-6bb9ca8280ff.html?mode=image&photo=0
- **Oil Trains Crash Because Heavy Tankers Are Affecting The Rails**
<http://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-crude-train-safety-20151007-story.html>
- **New Regulations Make Oil Pipelines Even Safer In California**
<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/industry-news/energy-and-resources/shipping-oil-through-pipelines-safer-than-by-rail-report-says/article25943221/>
<http://www.santamariasun.com/news/13766/california-governor-signs-series-of-pipeline-safety-and-oil-spill-response-bills/>
- **Fire Chief Confirms -- Diluted Tar Sands Is More Flammable Than San Ardo Oil**
<http://www.sanluisobispo.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/article41250099.html>
- **Rail Oil Spills & Violent Rail Accidents Are Accelerating, Not Stable Or Declining**
<http://necir.org/2015/05/20/rail-safety-fact-check/>
- **The Tribune's Official Position - P66's Crude Oil Trains Are "A Bad Idea"**
http://www.sanluisobispo.com/2015/09/06/3793783_routing-oil-trains-through-densely.html?rh=1
- **In P66's Future - A New Source Of Crude Via Pipeline**
<http://www.pacbiztimes.com/2015/09/04/oil-company-wants-to-expand-orcutt-drilling-despite-pipe-closures/>

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- **Union Pacific Tells Us “All Is Safe” -- The Numbers Tell Us Differently**
http://www.theeagle.com/news/local/union-pacific-officials-exploring-possible-link-between-derailments-in-robertson/article_633d4d3b-1053-504a-9c66-9132931bce1d.html?mode=jqm
- **“EMPTY” Crude Oil Rail Cars -- They’re As Explosive As FULL Cars**
<http://fox2now.com/2015/08/23/first-responders-concerned-about-possible-oil-train-derailment-in-st-louis/>
<http://eaglefordtexas.com/news/id/150833/oil-trains-put-local-emergency-officials-on-alert/>
<http://www.forbes.com/sites/jamesconca/2015/04/06/senators-try-to-stop-the-coming-oil-train-wreck/>
- **New Analysis -- Shipping Oil By RAIL Is Far More Dangerous Than Via PIPELINE**
<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/industry-news/energy-and-resources/shipping-oil-through-pipelines-safer-than-by-rail-report-says/article25943221/>
<http://www.newsoptimist.ca/opinion/columnists/pipelines-are-the-safest-way-to-ship-oil-1.2037721>
- **Union Pacific - Lagging Well Behind On Adopting Safety Requirements**
<http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/wireStory/railroads-meet-deadline-safety-technology-32945711>
- **New Proof Emerges -- Tar Sands Is An Extreme Danger To The Earth & Its Inhabitants**
<http://summitcountyvoice.com/2015/06/28/environment-tar-sands-oil-releases-20-percent-more-greenhouse-gas-pollution-than-conventional-crude-oil/>
<http://pubs.acs.org/doi/abs/10.1021/acs.est.5b01255>
- **“Viewpoint” Article Explains Why Oil-By-Rail Is Both Unnecessary & Wrong For CA**
<http://www.sanluisobispo.com/2015/08/05/3749645/phillips-66s-oil-rail-project.html>
- **P66’s Trains Would Travel Over A Crumbling Bridge In Arroyo Grande**
<http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Assets/PL/Santa+Maria+Refinery+Rail+Project+Comments/Organizations+and+Schools/Coastal+San+Luis+Resource+Conservation+District.pdf>
<http://www.sacbee.com/news/local/article2621371.html>
- **“New Rules” From The Fed Allow Lethal Tankers To Keep Rolling**
<http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2014/01/27/215650/railroad-tank-car-safety-woes.html>
- **Diluted Tar Sands - New Proof That Shipments Are Extremely Flammable**
<http://www.railwayage.com/index.php/safety/why-bitumen-isnt-necessarily-safer-than-bakken.html>
- **Future Crude-By-Rail Disasters - Now Guaranteed By The DOT**
<http://www.dailykos.com/story/2015/02/23/1366308/-Get-used-to-it-Dept-of-Transportation-predicts-10-oil-train-derailments-a-year#>
- **A Member Of Congress Warns Of Terrorist Attacks Against Crude Oil Trains:**
<http://blogs.rollcall.com/the-container/new-yorker-sees-risk-of-terrorists-using-oil-trains/>
- **A New Record! More Railroad Oil Spills Than Ever:**
<http://www.nbcnews.com/news/investigations/oil-train-spills-hit-record-level-2014-n293186>
- **What The Rail Terminal Will Sound Like:**
https://soundcloud.com/katie-lannan/3-51-a-m-11-07-14?in=katie-lannan/sets/linden_oil_trains
- **Article In “New Times” Reaffirms Air Quality Problems On The Nipomo Mesa:**
<http://www.newtimeslo.com/news/11776/dust-bust-even-as-stakeholders-make-small-advances-air-pollution-is-still-a-problem-on-the-nipomo-mesa/>
- **How Far Would SLO County Have To Evacuate?:** <http://explosive-crude-by-rail.org>
- **Video - Listen To A Survivor Of The Lac-Mégantic Oil Train Disaster:**
<http://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2014/03/06/explosion-survivor-warns-of-fracked-oil-trains-newer-safety-regulations-delayed/>
- **Video - What Oil Trains Would Look & Sound Like In SLO County:**
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11DTf6CYzHM&index=47&list=PL7A2C41AC7F231BD4>

D. STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS; LOGISTICS OF THIS NEWSLETTER

1. Mesa Refinery Watch Group Steering Committee: Contact one or more of our members with your comments or to learn about upcoming committee meetings.

- Linda Reynolds (Founder): lreynolds151@gmail.com
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2. List Coordinator/Newsletter Distributor: If you would like to add names for receipt of this newsletter, or if you would like to stop receiving it, kindly contact Steve Dubow -- sfdubow@charter.net.